IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 23 through 33 have been amended herein. Please note that pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(3), all claims currently pending and under consideration in the referenced application are shown below, in clean form, for clarity. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(1)(ii), also attached is a version of the amended claims with markings to show changes made thereto. Please enter the claims as amended.

23. (Thrice Amended) An operable gate stack on a silicon substrate having a dielectric layer thereover, said dielectric layer being substantially devoid of pitting, said operable gate stack including a non-crystalline metallic silicide film and a dielectric cap on said non-crystalline metallic silicide film.

24. (Four Times Amended) An operable gate stack on a silicon substrate having a dielectric layer thereover, said dielectric layer being substantially devoid of pitting, said operable gate stack including an amorphous metallic silicide film, wherein said amorphous metallic silicide film is substantially devoid of silicon clusters, and a dielectric cap on said amorphous metallic silicide film.

25. (Five Times Amended) An operable gate stack on a silicon substrate having a dielectric layer thereover, said dielectric layer being substantially devoid of pitting, said operable gate stack comprising:
a polysilicon layer disposed over said dielectric layer;
a non-crystalline metallic silicide film disposed over said polysilicon layer; and
a dielectric cap on said non-crystalline metallic silicide film.

26. (Four Times Amended) A gate stack structure comprising an operable gate stack on a dielectric layer, over a silicon substrate, wherein said dielectric layer is substantially devoid of pitting, said operable gate stack comprising a metallic silicide film and a dielectric cap on said metallic silicide film.

27. (Four Times Amended) The gate stack structure of claim 26, wherein said metallic silicide film comprises a non-crystalline metallic silicide film.

28. (Thrice Amended) The gate stack structure of claim 26, wherein said metallic silicide film comprises an amorphous metallic silicide film substantially devoid of silicon clusters.

29. (Amended) A semiconductor device, comprising at least one gate stack formed on a silicon substrate having a dielectric layer thereover, said dielectric layer being substantially devoid of pitting, said at least one gate stack comprising a non-crystalline metallic silicide film and a dielectric cap on said non-crystalline metallic silicide film.

30. (Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 29, wherein said at least one gate stack further comprises a polysilicon layer disposed over said dielectric layer, said non-crystalline metallic silicide film being disposed over said polysilicon layer.

31. (Amended) A semiconductor device, comprising at least one gate stack structure on a dielectric layer, over a silicon substrate, wherein said dielectric layer is substantially devoid of pitting, said at least one gate stack structure comprising a metallic silicide film and a dielectric cap on said metallic silicide film.

32. (Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 31, wherein said metallic silicide film comprises a non-crystalline metallic silicide film.

33. (Amended) The semiconductor device of claim 31, wherein said metallic silicide film comprises an amorphous metallic silicide film substantially devoid of silicon clusters.